

# COUNTY OF YORK

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** September 25, 2003 (BOS Mtg. 10/7/03)

**TO:** York County Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** James O. McReynolds, County Administrator

**SUBJECT:** Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment – Cluster Development Building Spacing Requirements

The recent application for amendment of the Colony Pines Planned Development building spacing requirements (to allow 15-foot spacing rather than 20 feet) has caused attention to be focused on both the planned development and cluster development requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. Currently, the Planned Development provisions in the Zoning Ordinance stipulate a 20-foot minimum building spacing, while the Cluster Development provisions allow the Building Code to control spacing and mandate special review by the Fire Chief for any spacing less than 20 feet. In accordance with these Cluster Development provisions, building spacing in some recently developed cluster subdivisions has been reduced to 15 feet. The Fire Chief has expressed concern about this opportunity because of the greater risk that a fire could spread from one home to the next. This could pose firefighting challenges that can result in a significantly higher level of response resources (personnel and/or equipment) to effectively combat a fire at one or more of the residences. As a general observation, the Department of Fire and Life Safety has suggested that consideration be given to restoring the 20-foot spacing requirement that was formerly part of the basic cluster development provisions. I support this recommendation and believe that standardizing the minimum building spacing requirements for planned developments (currently at 20 feet) and cluster developments would be appropriate from a safety and community character standpoint. Accordingly, I recommend adoption of the attached resolution to formally sponsor a Zoning Ordinance text amendment application and refer it to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Carter/3337:jmc

Attachment: Proposed Resolution No. R03-165